

SUE: And who's taking part?

MARTIN: Well, local boat clubs, but the standard is very high. One of them came first in the West of England regional championship in May this year – it was the first time a team from Burnham has won. It means that next year they'll be representing the region in the national championship.

Q6

SUE: Now I've heard something about Paxton Nature Reserve. It's a good place for spotting unusual birds, isn't it?

Q7

MARTIN: That's right – throughout the year. There is a lake there, as well as a river, and they provide a very attractive habitat. So it's a good idea to bring binoculars if you have them. And just at the moment you can see various flowers that are pretty unusual – the soil at Paxton isn't very common. They're looking good right now.

Q8

SUE: Right. My husband will be particularly interested in that.

MARTIN: And there's going to be a talk and slide show about mushrooms – and you'll be able to go out and pick some afterwards and study the different varieties.

Q9

SUE: Uhuh. And is it possible for children to swim in the river?

MARTIN: Yes. Part of it has been fenced off to make it safe for children to swim in. It's very shallow, and there's a lifeguard on duty whenever it's open. The lake is too deep, so swimming isn't allowed there.

Q10

SUE: OK, we must remember to bring their swimming things, in case we go to Paxton. How long does it take to get there by car from Burnham?

MARTIN: About 20 minutes, but parking is very limited, so it's usually much easier to go by bus – and it takes about the same time.

SUE: Right. Well, I'll discuss the options with the rest of the family. Thanks very much for all your help.

MARTIN: You're welcome.

SUE: Goodbye.

MARTIN: Bye.

SECTION 2

MAN: First of all, let me thank you all for coming to this public meeting, to discuss the future of our town. Our first speaker is Shona Ferguson, from Barford town council. Shona.

SHONA: Thank you. First I'll briefly give you some background information, then I'll be asking you for your comments on developments in the town.

Well, as you don't need me to tell you, Barford has changed a great deal in the last 50 years. These are some of the main changes.

Fifty years ago, buses linked virtually every part of the town and the neighbouring towns and villages. Most people used them frequently, but not now, because the bus companies concentrate on just the routes that attract most passengers. So parts of the town are no longer served by buses. Even replacing old uncomfortable buses with smart new ones has had little impact on passenger numbers. It's sometimes said that bus fares are too high, but in relation to average incomes, fares are not much higher than they were 50 years ago.

Q11

Changes in the road network are affecting the town. The centre was recently closed to traffic on a trial basis, making it much safer for pedestrians. The impact of this is being measured. The new cycle paths, separating bikes from cars in most main roads, are being used far more than was expected, reducing traffic and improving air quality. And although the council's attempts to have a bypass constructed have failed, we haven't given up hope of persuading the government to change its mind.

Q12

Shopping in the town centre has changed over the years. Many of us can remember when the town was crowded with people going shopping. Numbers have been falling for several years, despite efforts to attract shoppers, for instance by opening new car parks. Some people combine